

A memorial from the depressed classes.

396. Mr. K. T. Mathew.—Will the Government be pleased to mention:—

(a) whether the Government have received a petition or memorial dated 1st September 1926 from the depressed classes of Cochin State;

(b) whether any reply has been sent to the petitioners and, if so, whether a copy of it will be placed on the table;

(c) if no reply has been sent, whether the request contained therein has been considered by the Government and, if so, whether the Government have now come to any decision in the matter, and if the answer is in the affirmative, what is the decision arrived at ;

(d) if no reply has been sent to the petitioners, whether the receipt of the petition or memorial has been acknowledged; and, if not, to give the reason for not acknowledging it till now ;

(e) the reason for making the acceptance of any other religion a ground of disqualification for enjoying the concession referred to in the petition or memorial ;

(f) whether the Government will state after making enquiries what is the policy followed by the Travancore Government in this matter and whether our Government have any objection in adopting the policy of the Travancore Government and, if there is any objection, what is the objection?

Mr. C. Matthai.—(a) Yes.

(b) Yes ; copy of the order is appended (*Vide Appendix II.*)

(c) (d) and (e). Do not arise.

(f) In Travancore the concessions enjoyed by the depressed communities are continued to them when they become converts. In view of the order appended, the latter part of the question does not arise.

Tenders invited by the Forest Department.

397. Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Will the Government be pleased to state:—

(a) why tenders have been invited by the Forest Department for contracts in the areas served by the Tramway for three years while the Diwan-President assured in the last session that the fate of the Tramway could be decided after scrutinising the work for some time and when the Special Finance Committee is yet to submit their report;

(b) to place on the table a list of contractors (loading, felling, etc.,) who commenced their work with agreements entered into by Mr. Alwar Chetty, the then Conservator and subsequent Conservators, who have not yet completed their work nor taken back the first deposit, they have made to the Government;

(c) whether all the trees marked for felling during the regime of Conservators Mr. Alwar Chetty and Mr. Johnston have been felled and removed and, if not, a detailed list of those remaining;

(d) whether the unremoved stock of timber is still lying at the place stalked, and whether it would pay to bring them through the Tramway for sale;

(e) the reasons for allowing fresh extraction while the old stock has not been wholly removed;

(f) whether a large quantity of valuable trees collected has been destroyed by fire, and if so, the quantity and the action taken by the Government on the defaulting official?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—(a) Tenders were invited because it was one of the conditions in all contracts connected with timber works in the areas tapped by the tramline that at any time according to the discretion of the Government work could be ordered to be stopped without assigning any reason.

(b) Please see *Appendix III*.

(c) All marked trees have been felled and removed.

(d) Yes.

(e) To remove the exploitable marketable timber.

(f) None at all by fire.

398. Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Will the Government be pleased to state the stage at which the proposal to the full particulars—length of the line proposed, estimated amount, the time required for completion and the total quantity of timber with the wages (Tram) sought to be carried by the line?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—The question is not intelligible.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—This is not the question I sent. Only a portion of the question is published. Please read the full question.

President.—It will be referred to.

The quantity of timber felled and carried down by the Tramway.

399. Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Will the Government be pleased to state:—

(a) the total quantity of timber felled in the area served by the Tramway from the opening of the line up to 1st Chingam 1102;

(b) the total quantity carried down by the Tramway;

(c) the total quantity still remaining there; and

(d) the total quantity lost either by fire or by other means?